



Borough of Bury St. Edmunds.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health

1938

BURY ST. EDMUNDS

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1938

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE.

The Worshipful The Mayor
(Councillor H. I. Jarman).

Alderman S. J. M. Sampson, M.C., M.A., L.L.M. (*Chairman*).

Councillor R. V. Willcox (*Vice-Chairman*).

Alderman J. P. Parkington.

Alderman S. Street.

Councillor H. Farrants.

Councillor E. J. Sewell.

Councillor W. H. Stones.

Councillor E. E. Watson.

Councillor Mrs. E. C. Wise.

Medical Officer of Health ;

Medical Superintendent Isolation Hospital;

School Medical Officer ;

Medical Officer Maternity and Child Welfare ;

Medical Superintendent Alexandra Home ;

Public Vaccinator Borough of Bury St. Edmunds.

District Medical Officer St. James' District—

Ernest Stork, D.S.O., J P., M.B (Lond).

Medical Officer St. Mary's District ;
Medical Officer Public Assistance Institution—

S. D. Kilner, M.D., B.Ch., Cantab.

Consulting Ophthalmic Surgeon School Medical Service —

J. W. E. Cory, M.D., Cantab.

Dental Surgeon—

S. Rhodes, L.D.S., Eng.

Pathologist—

Miss Joyce Cockram, D.M., B.Ch., Oxon.

Veterinary Surgeon—

P. R. Turner, M.R.C.V.S.

Public Analyst—

W. Lincolne Sutton, F.I.C.

Sanitary Inspector—

E. F. Eldred (Specialised in Food Inspection).

Matron of the Isolation Hospital—

Miss M. Spiller.

Health Visitor (M. & C.W.)—

Miss C. Osborne.

School Nurses—

Miss O. Sneezeum.

Mrs. C. Gates.

TO THE MAYOR, ALDERMEN, AND
COUNCILLORS OF THE BOROUGH
OF BURY ST. EDMUNDS

Mr. Mayor, Mrs. Wise, and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present to you my 36th Report on the administration of the Public Health Service. We have grown accustomed in recent years to regard an absence of untoward happenings as a matter of course; but this habit has been achieved only by incessant if unobtrusive vigilance by the Public Health Committee, and by the loyal help of the officials who have supported me in my endeavour to supervise and guide the Service generally. It has been, for me, an easy and a pleasant task, and I hope that you will consider that the results justify me in expressing my thanks to them all. Only two special problems await solution. The first concerns the M. & C. W. Clinic, where the help of a second Health Visitor has become imperative, if the demands on the Centre are to be satisfied. These have only been met by the enlistment of voluntary helpers, and the warmest thanks of the Borough and its Council are due to Mrs. Steward, Mrs. Bulling, Mrs. Coates, Mrs. Higginson, Miss Napier and Miss Betty Kilner, who have formed a team to assist Miss Osborne at the regular sessions of the Clinic; without their assistance it would have been impossible to keep the records which are essential as a test of progress and efficiency.

The second trouble I have in mind is the failure of so many people whom we have tried to help with new and better houses to clear themselves and their children, from the stigma of being verminous. There is no excuse for dirt in any of the new Council houses, and unfortunately it is there that head-lice in school children, and bed bugs predominate.

We shall concentrate on these two problems during the current year, and, given understanding and good-will, I hope to be able to record a considerable improvement in my next Report.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

ERNEST STORK,

Medical Officer of Health

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

Area	...	...	3659 acres.
Registrar-General's Estimate of Resident Population	...	...	16890
Census, 1931	...	...	16708
Number of inhabited Houses (Estimated)	...	...	4908
Rateable value	...	...	£106,842.

A Penny Rate represents £415.

The figures for the granting of Out-Door Relief compared with those for 1937 (which are in brackets) show a marked decrease in all conditions, but the total cost is slightly higher than in 1937.

Social
Conditions

Men	...	...	160	(210).
Women	...	...	198	(239).
Children	...	...	163	(253).
Total	...	...	521	(702).

Cost £3955 18s. 5d. (3,897 14s. 7d.

There was an increase in the number of Casuals.

Men	...	...	7980	(6985).
Women	...	...	255	(217).
Children	...	...	38	(43).
Total	...	...	8273	(7245).

		<i>Total.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>	
Live Births	Legitimate	252	133	119	Vital Statistics
	Illegitimate	5	2	3	

Birth Rate per 1,000 of population	...	15.21
" " " " " England and Wales	...	15.1

Stillbirths :—Total 8. M. 4. F. 4.

Rate per 1,000 of population	...	.47
England and Wales	...	.60
Rate per 1,000 total (life and still) births	...	30.1

	<i>Total.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F.</i>
Deaths	188	99	89
Crude Death Rate per 1,000 of population	...	11.13	
Death Rate corrected for age and sex distribution	...	9.4	
Death Rate for England and Wales	...	11.6	

Deaths from Puerperal Causes :—

Puerperal Sepsis	...	...	0
Other Puerperal Causes	...	...	1
Total	...	...	1
Rate per 1,000 total Births	...	...	3.7

Death of Infants under 1 year of age :—

	<i>Total.</i>	<i>M.</i>	<i>F</i>
Legitimate	...	4	3
Illegitimate	...	—	—
Rate, Legitimate, per 1,000 legitimate live births	15.8		
„ England and Wales	53
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	0
„ „ Whooping Cough (all ages)	0
„ „ Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	0

The total legitimate births show a decrease and the birth-rate is approximately the same as that for England and Wales. Illegitimate births fell from 8 to 5, while still-births remain the same as in 1937.

It is satisfactory to record that the crude death-rate per 1,000 of population has fallen from 11.7 to 11.13 and the rate corrected for age and sex distribution from 9.9 to 9.4.

Deaths of infants under one year of age gave a rate for legitimate live births of 15.8 per 1,000 as against 22 in the previous year. This infant mortality rate, compared with that of the Country generally, continues to be one of the most satisfactory features, as it has been in several reports in recent years.

Deaths from Cancer decreased from 37 to 33, but those from Heart Disease and allied Circulatory Conditions showed a correspondingly small increase.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES.

These services have been fully described in recent reports and there have been no changes or developments to record.

The Maternity and Child Welfare Centre held 102 sessions compared with 97 the year before. The number of infants attending was 230, compared with 170 in 1937 and 148 in 1936, which shows that the Clinic is increasingly appreciated. The total attendances for the year rose from 2027 to 2959, an increase of approximately 46%.

The Health Visitor's visits to infants under one year of age decreased from 1327 to 1252 and to older children from 2443 to 1642. This proves conclusively that the peak which can be attained by a single Health Visitor has been passed and there is bound to be retrogression in view of the large number of mothers and children attending the Clinic not only on the set days, but at intervals every day in the week. Miss Osborne's services cannot be assessed too highly, for her work has been unremitting, and she enjoys the entire confidence of all parents who attend the Clinic.

Reference was made last year to the subject of a second Health Visitor, and a prolonged attempt to secure the services of one, in spite of extensive advertising, failed. The Council has now decided that the services of a second Health Visitor are indispensable, and agreed to offer what must be considered a reasonable salary. It remains to be seen whether the supply of women suitable for this type of work is sufficient to satisfy our needs.

Artificial food is provided, either free or at cost price, in necessitous cases.

The School Clinic treated 1210 individual children, with a total of 5620 attendances, both figures showing an increase over the previous year.

The Isolation Hospital. The 16 cases of Scarlet Fever and 4 cases of Diphtheria were about the average.

Children's Act. Five children have been kept under observation by Miss Osborne, their home conditions being uniformly satisfactory.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

The Public water supply is now submitted to a monthly analysis and bacteriological examination. It continues to be of exceptional purity.

Water.

Extensions of supply were as follows :—

West Road Housing Site	...	138 lin. yards.
Park Road	...	165 „
Hardwick Lane	...	60 „
Westley Road	...	321 „

**Drainage
and
Sewerage**

There have been no complaints affecting the Sewage Farm at West Stow.

Extensions of soil sewers were made in :—

Westley Road	...	40 lin. yards.
Westbury Avenue	...	160 „
Perry Road	...	70 „
West Road Housing site	...	130 „
Petticoat Lane (relief sewer)	...	190 „

Extensions of surface water sewers were made in :—

Westbury Avenue	...	65 lin. yards.
Highbury Road	...	60 „
Linnet Road	...	70 „
Perry Road	...	60 „

**Rivers and
Streams.**

These have remained under supervision and the Borough Surveyor has taken steps to ensure their cleansing as occasion arises.

**Closet
Accom-
modation.**

All closets are on the water-carriage system, the minimum provision for working class dwellings being one W.C. for two houses.

**Public
Cleansing.**

The chimney at the Destructor, erected in 1937, was apparently satisfactory during the first few months after its erection. During the year, however, owing to some fault in its draught, complaints were received of smuts and even unconsumed paper being scattered over the area in its proximity. It was decided that this was due to faulty stoking and steps have been taken to prevent a repetition of this nuisance. The Borough Surveyor and the Public Health Department would welcome any further complaints on this subject.

SANITARY CONDITIONS

**Lodging
Houses**

Two common lodging houses are under the care of the Sanitary Inspector and have given no cause for complaint.

Fried fish shops, which are registered under this heading are the only premises in this category. They have been regularly inspected and found satisfactory.

**Offensive
Trades.**

There are eight premises where Rag Flock is prepared, the material being imported in bulk and generally appearing new.

**Rag Flock
Acts, 1911
and 1928**

SANITARY INSPECTION.

The following is the Inspector's report under Article 19 of the Sanitary Officer's Order, 1927.

Number of Visits paid ... **3536**

NUISANCES DEALT WITH.

New W.C.'s	...	...	...	5
Defective W.C 's	...	...	...	33
Accumulations of Refuse	...	...	...	5
Animals	...	...	...	2
Dirty Walls and Ceilings	...	...	...	4
Defective Walls and Ceilings	...	...	...	36
D and Bell Traps abolished	...	...	...	1
Overcrowding	...	...	...	77
Defective Drains	...	...	...	10
Blocked Drains	...	...	...	9
Dirty condition of Workshops	...	...	...	2
Defective Roofs	...	...	...	25
Defective Floors	...	...	...	22
Defective Troughing and Rain-water Pipes	...	...	...	15
Defective paving of Yards	...	...	...	7
Damps Floors and Walls	...	...	...	13
Sinks and Wastes, defects of	...	...	...	3
Insufficient Water supply	...	...	...	2
Defective window Frames	...	...	...	19
Dirty Condition of House and Bedding	...	...	...	3
Stoves repaired or new ones provided	...	...	...	8
Insufficient Lighting or Ventilation	...	...	...	3
Ashbins provided	...	...	...	3
Miscellaneous	...	...	...	37
Number of complaints received	...	...	...	46
Verbal notices given	...	...	...	11
Preliminary notices given	...	...	...	72
Statutory notices	...	...	...	14

Visits for Infectious Diseases	...	...	31
Houses disinfected	...	...	36
Samples under Food and Drugs (Adulteration)			
Act 1928	...	...	33
Visits to Bakehouses	...	...	68
Visits to Dairies and Cowsheds	...	...	55
Visits to Slaughterhouses	..	...	1119

Reference to the above list will show that while general defects of construction and maintenance have remained fairly constant, there has been a very considerable increase in the matter of overcrowding. This was the inevitable result of the detailed survey carried out under the Housing Acts 1935 and 1936. Reference to Section 4 under Housing Statistics will show that the action taken to meet the problem has been quite satisfactory.

The Shops Act, 1934. This Act is administered by the Watch Committee and no reference has been made to the Public Health Department. The following information has been supplied by the Officer concerned—

- (a) Ventilation and Temperature of Shops—No action found necessary.
- (b) Sanitary Conveniences—One certificate of exemption was granted.

Public Health Act, 1936—Offices. No action found necessary.

Smoke Abatement. No action was found necessary.

Swimming Baths and Pools The Corporation Swimming Pool has been well maintained and an analysis of the water taken during the year gave a satisfactory result. The question of the temperature of the water in the pool when used by the Schools has been dealt with in the report of the School Medical Service.

Eradication of Bed Bugs. Seven Council houses and 13 other houses were found to be infested with bed bugs and the method adopted by the Local Authority for their eradication was spraying with proprietary insecticides and steam disinfection of bedding where necessary.

A further step has been taken in an endeavour to reduce this disgusting blot on home life by the Public Health Department being asked to notify the Housing Committee of undesirable families in this respect; and the appointment of an Inspector by the Housing Committee should facilitate the interchange of information. Unfortunately a considerable section of the people transferred from slums to Council houses has failed to appreciate the advantages conferred on it, and has shown neither care nor a desire for cleanliness

SCHOOLS.

The eight elementary schools are all supplied with water from the public main and connected with the public sewerage system.

1.—Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the year—

(1)	(a)	Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ...	248
	(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose ...	248
(2)	(a)	Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above which were inspected and recorded under the Housing and Consolidated Regulations, 1925	35
	(b)	Number of inspections made for the purpose ...	35
(3)		Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation ...	5
(4)		Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation ...	81

2.—Remedy of defects during the year without service of formal Notices—

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by Local Authority or their Officers	68
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3.—*Action under Statutory Powers during the year—*

A. — Proceedings under Sections 17, 18 and 23 of the Housing Act, 1930 :—

- | | | |
|-----|--|---|
| (1) | Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Notices were served requiring repairs | 0 |
| (2) | Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal Notices :— | |
| (a) | By Owners | 0 |
| (b) | By Local Authority in default of Owners | 0 |

B.—Proceedings under Public Health Acts :—

- | | | |
|-----|--|---|
| (1) | Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Notices were served requiring defects to be remedied: | 4 |
| (2) | Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal Notices :— | |
| (a) | By Owners | 4 |
| (b) | By Local Authority in default of Owners | 0 |

C. — Proceedings under Sections 19 and 21 of the Housing Act, 1930 :—

- | | | |
|-----|--|---|
| (1) | Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made | 2 |
| (2) | Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders ... | 0 |

D.—Proceedings under Section 20 of the Housing Act, 1930 :—

- | | | |
|-----|--|---|
| (1) | Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made ... | 0 |
| (2) | Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined. the tenement or room having been rendered fit | 0 |

4.—*Housing Act, 1936, Part, 4* Overcrowded.

(a)	(i)	Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year ...	34
	(ii)	Number of families dwelling therein	39
	(iii)	Number of persons dwelling therein	244
(b)		Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year ...	19
(c)	(i)	Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year ..	77
	(ii)	Number of persons concerned in such cases ...	572
(d)		Particulars of any cases in which dwelling-houses have again become overcrowded after the Local Authority have taken steps for the abatement of overcrowding ...	Nil
(e)		Any other particulars with respect to overcrowding conditions upon which the Medical Officer of Health may consider it desirable to report	Nil

It should again be emphasised under part 4, Section (C) sub sections (i and ii) that the number of cases of overcrowding relieved and the number of persons concerned in such cases were roughly quadrupled.

Number of New Houses erected:—

(a)	By Local Authority	....	53
(b)	By Private Enterprise	....	81

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

The Inspection of Dairies, Cowsheds and Milk-shops is thoroughly conducted. Three licences were in force for the sale of T.T. (Certified) Milk, one for the sale of "Pasteurised" milk and one bottling licence for "Accredited" Milk.

One sample was taken for the West Suffolk County Council for bacteriological and biological examination, with the following result:—

No tubercle present.
No coliform bacilli present.
Bacteria-count 14,000 per ml.
Methylene Blue Test satisfactory.

Meat and
other
Foods.

There are eleven slaughterhouses which are licensed annually. The "Humane Killer" is in universal use. Visits of inspection numbered 1119 during the year and carcasses inspected and condemned were as follows:—

CARCASSES INSPECTED AND CONDEMNED.

	CATTLE excluding COWS	COWS	CALVES	SHEEP AND LAMBS	PIGS
Number inspected	1248	8	48	2208	3597
<i>All diseases except Tuberculosis</i>					
Whole carcasses condemned	2	0	0	1	9
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	25	0	0	0	26
Percentage of the number in- spected affected with disease other than tuberculosis	2 16	—	—	.04	.97
<i>Tuberculosis only</i>					
Whole carcasses condemned	2	0	0	0	4
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	15	0	0	0	87
Percentage of the number in- spected affected with tuberculosis	1.36	0	0	0	2.52

Attention was drawn last year to the fact that tuberculosis in pigs is more frequent than in cattle. This preponderance continues.

Samples.					No.	Genuine.	Adul- terated.	Adultera- tion.
New Milk	...	...	...	..	18	15	3	
Butter	...	...	...	...	2	2	—	
Margarine	...	...	...	...	1	1	—	
Lard	...	...	..	..	1	1	—	
Coffee	...	...	...	...	1	1	—	
Sausages	...	...	...	...	2	1	1	
Vinegar	...	...	...	...	2	2	—	
Olive Oil	...	...	...	...	1	1	—	
Sugar	...	...	...	...	1	1	—	
Tinned Peas	..	...	...	...	1	1	—	
Marmalade	...	...	...	.	1	1	—	
Jam	...	...	...	...	1	1	—	
Dried Fruit	..	...	...	...	1	1	—	
Total	...	...	...	...	33	29	4	

As to this, although three samples of milk were found to be unsatisfactory in the first instance, second samples gave satisfactory results. In each case the vendor was given a warning. The sample of sausages showed an excess of preservative to the small extent of 5 parts per million.

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

There were 16 cases of Scarlet Fever and 4 cases of Diphtheria. No "return" cases have been recorded for many years.

The value of School records in detecting susceptible contacts in cases of infectious diseases is incontrovertible and has been exercised by excluding them all during the incubation periods.

One case of Typhoid Fever, which was notified late in 1937, died early in 1938. The patient had been working in the country and there was nothing to connect his infection with local conditions.

Five cases of Puerperal Pyrexia were notified, four occurring in Institutions. This is a very small percentage and shows that the Maternity services in the Borough, generally speaking, stand on a very high level.

Vaccination. The Vaccination Acts are administered according to the Law as it stands. The number of exemptions obtained thereunder have not yet been ascertained

Prevention of Blindness. Section 176 of the Public Health Act 1936. The Maternity and Child Welfare clinic deals with all cases of Ophthalmia Neonatorum. For the seventh year in succession this was absent in 1938, a further tribute to the excellence of the Maternity services in the Borough.

Tuberculosis. Six male and three female deaths were attributed to Tuberculosis, which is approximately the same as in 1937.

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—
5	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
10	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
20	1	3	—	—	1	1	—	—
25	1	2	—	—	1	—	—	—
35	3	1	—	—	2	—	—	—
45	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
55	—	2	—	—	—	1	1	—
65 and over	1	1	—	—	1	1	—	—
Totals ..	7	1	1	2	5	3	1	—

Infantile Paralysis. The prevalence of Infantile Paralysis in the surrounding districts caused considerable anxiety just before the beginning of the summer holidays. The swimming baths were closed to all children, and no case occurred.

INQUESTS.

Four inquests were held and twelve deaths were certified by the Coroner without an inquest.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS ACT, 1901, AND THE FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

1.—INSPECTIONS, including Inspections made by Sanitary Inspectors.

PREMISES.	Number of		
	Inspections.	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted.
Factories with mechanical power	7	0	0
Factories without mechanical power	67	0	0
Other premises under the Act (including works of building and engineering construction but not including outworkers premises).	8	0	0
Total	82	0	0

2. DEFECTS FOUND.

PARTICULARS.	Number of Defects.			Number of defects in respect of which Prosecutions were Instituted.
	Found	Remedied.	Referred to H.M. In- spector	
Want of Cleanliness	2	2	—	—
Overcrowding	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature	—	—	—	—
Inadequate Ventilation	—	—	—	—
Infective Drainage of Floors	—	—	—	—
Sanitary { if sufficient	—	—	—	—
Conveniences { unsuitable or defective	3	3	—	—
not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—
Other Offences — (Not including offences relating to Home Work or offences mentioned in the Schedule to the Ministry of Health (Factories and Workshops Transfer of Powers) Order 1921 and re-enacted in the Third Schedule to the Factories Act, 1937).	—	—	—	—
Total	5	5	—	—



